

STRATEGIC PLANNING

FOR COMMUNITY AND
SPORTING
ORGANISATIONS



Livingstone
SHIRE COUNCIL

SPORTING / COMMUNITY ORGANISATION DETAILS

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PART A: OVERVIEW

1. What is Strategic Planning?

Strategic planning is the process to establish a strategy which enables the organisation to understand its opportunities and challenges, set measurable goals, identify required resources, and prioritise its activities in order to most effectively and efficiently achieve its vision and / or purpose. A strategic plan should have a high-level overview of your organisation's direction with enough detail to enable it to be applied to everyday operations. A strategic plan needs to be monitored and updated regularly to continue to be useful.

2. Why Develop a Strategic Plan?

Beyond developing unity throughout your organisation through commitment to a common vision, by far the greatest benefit in establishing a strategic plan is that the combined efforts of the organisation are focussed on achieving the same identified goals. This then flows on to numerous other benefits for the organisation such as:

- Gaining support / sponsorship;
- Strengthening funding applications;
- Focusing efforts; and
- Enabling other planning activities (e.g continuity planning, succession planning, financial planning etc).

3. Understanding the Process

The process to develop a strategic plan is often far less complex than perceived. In its simplest form, a strategic plan is an overview of the organisation's goals and an outline of actions to complete in order to achieve these goals. The development of a strategic plan is sometimes best completed by a separate planning team that seeks input and feedback from members along with the organisation's committee. The planning team should include representatives from the organisation and hold specific meetings to facilitate development of a strategic plan.

The size of the planning team should be carefully considered to ensure a good cross-section of the organisation is represented, without falling into the trap of having too many members. Usually, a planning team of four (4) to six (6) members is most effective, and may include:

- A committee member;
- A coach or other official;
- Member's representative;
- Representative from state or governing body (as appropriate);
- An external facilitator (if desired); and
- A long-term sponsor (if applicable).

4. Planning for the Plan

The planning team should begin by reviewing the organisation's past plans and any associated outcomes, as well as the present position of the organisation including its mission and vision. These factors will assist in developing a meaningful strategic plan.

As well as reviewing these documents, the planning team should contact the state body of your organisation if applicable. Many sporting groups, as well as other community organisations such as the Country Women's Association and Lions and Lionesses clubs, have state bodies. More often than not, a state body will have an overarching strategic plan and it is important that the organisation align with this where possible. It is also a good opportunity to make the state body aware that your organisation is undertaking a strategic planning exercise. This also provides an opportunity for state representatives to be involved in the process.

It is also important to identify the time period your plan will cover. Strategic plans usually cover a three to five-year period. Your organisation should select a time period suitable to your purpose.

**PART B:
STRATEGIC
PLANNING**

5. SWOT Analysis

Once the planning team has reviewed existing plans, they should undertake a simple SWOT analysis to identify current and future strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Identifying these factors will ensure they are considered in the development of the strategic plan and that the plan will be valid and meaningful.

ACTIVITY ONE – SWOT ANALYSIS

STRENGTHS

WEAKNESSES

OPPORTUNITIES

THREATS

6. Developing the plan

The purpose of a strategic plan is to determine the purpose of your organisation, what factors are vital to ensure this purpose is realised, what the priorities of the organisation are, and how you will know you have achieved these priorities. This can be done in six key steps:

STEP ONE: Develop a vision, purpose, and principles

STEP TWO: Identify key drivers

STEP THREE: Identify strategic priorities

STEP FOUR: Identify targets / indicators of performance

STEP FIVE: Implement your plan

STEP SIX: Review your plan

STEP ONE: DEVELOP A VISION, PURPOSE, AND PRINCIPLES

1: Vision

A strategic plan will not succeed unless it is derived from a clear vision of what the organisation will look like at a specific point in the future. Most commonly, a strategic plan will be developed with a view to achieve a vision within three (3) or five (5) year period.

Strategic plans are founded in the organisation's vision, which should be explicit, straightforward, and concise. Ideally, a vision statement will be a one-sentence statement describing clearly the long-term outcome envisioned by your organisation; for example: "Our vision is to facilitate vibrant, inclusive, and sustainable rural arts projects across Livingstone Shire."

II: Purpose

A purpose statement clearly explains what your organisation does. It is a short, formal statement about: what the organisation aims to do (purpose) and who will benefit. It is the reason the organisation exists and helps keep everyone in the organisation focussed on a common purpose; for example: "Our mission is to inspire lifelong learning, advance knowledge, and strengthen the social connections of older residents of Livingstone Shire."

III: Principles

The principles of an organisation are its guiding values which apply across the organisation and underpin how work is carried out. An organisation's values are its basic beliefs about what really matters, which influences how things should be done. It is a good idea to list the principles and how they apply to your organisation; for example: "Our work will be guided and informed by our beliefs and commitments to: **Inclusiveness**: we respect people, value diversity, and are committed to equality; **Participation**: we value and recognise the contribution of volunteers within organisations and communities; **Quality**: we strive for excellence through continuous improvement; and **Openness**: we are committed to a culture of teamwork and collaboration."

In **ACTIVITY TWO: STRATEGIC PLAN** record your vision statement, purpose, and principles.

STEP TWO: IDENTIFY KEY DRIVERS

Key drivers are factors that affect the performance of your organisation: it is something that has a significant impact on whether your group does well or not. Key drivers might include things like resources, partners (i.e. other organisations or businesses you partner with to deliver outcomes), location, and costs. To determine what the key drivers of your organisation are, consider factors that:

- Affect performance;
- Are measurable;
- Compare to a standard; and
- Can be acted upon.

In *ACTIVITY TWO: STRATEGIC PLAN* record your key drivers.

STEP THREE: IDENTIFY STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Now that you understand the vision, purpose, values, and key drivers of your organisation, it is time to consider what you need to do to realise your vision. The number of goals / priorities identified by the organisation may vary depending on a number of internal and external influences; however, having three to five clearly defined goals is a good starting point. Remember that in the first instance it is important that the organisation does not 'bite off more than it can chew': there will be other strategic plans in the future and other opportunities to achieve outcomes.

SMART goals are integral to the successful implementation of a strategic plan. The planning team should identify goals, with consideration to the information obtained throughout the planning stage, that are:

- Specific;
- Measurable;
- Achievable;
- Realistic; and
- Time-bound.

Once goals have been identified, the planning team should develop and detail key actions that, upon completion, will allow the organisation to achieve their goals. For example, if a goal is 'increase junior membership by thirty players for next season,' a key action might be 'recruit and train two new junior coaches to allow for planned growth' or 'facilitate a come-and-try afternoon to encourage new members'.

During the development of a strategic plan, the planning team should also outline any resources required to achieve the key actions / priorities. Resources that may be required include volunteers, financial contributions, infrastructure, equipment, or plant.

In **ACTIVITY TWO: STRATEGIC PLAN** record your strategic priorities along with responsible members, actions, and any required resources.

STEP FOUR: IDENTIFY TARGETS / INDICATORS OF PERFORMANCE

To ensure your organisation is on track and achieving goals, you need to understand how you will know when goals have been achieved. This will require measurements, or indicators of performance. Your organisation may prefer to use another term, but these are essentially marks of success and identify tangible measures of performance.

To identify these indicators, review your strategic priorities and associated actions. How will it be obvious that these priorities have been completed? Ensure that the indicators you choose are measurable (i.e. it is easy to determine when the goal has been reached and when it has not yet been reached); for example: 'Thirty new junior players registered by June 30, 2019'.

In **ACTIVITY TWO: STRATEGIC PLAN** record your indicators of performance.

STEP FIVE: IMPLEMENT YOUR PLAN

In order to successfully implement a strategic plan, it is vital that responsibilities are clearly identified and assigned to the appropriate people or committee member/s. This can be achieved by documenting the responsibilities associated with each key action, keeping records of activity and actions taken to achieve the action, and confirming when key action is completed. Keeping these records and documentation will also assist the organisation in the future.

Clearly communicating the plan and gaining the support of the entire organisation is another important aspect when implementing a strategic plan. Without support from all members the plan will most likely fail. This is why it is important to include a range of members of the planning team and ensure that the plan is clearly communicated with other members of the organisation throughout the planning stages.

By having, and more importantly implementing, a strategic plan the organisation will be better positioned to stay focused and committed to achieving the identified goals. Strategic plans assist organisations to manage competing priorities and ensure any actions are carefully considered, and allow the committee to ask: will this action help us achieve our goal?

The organisation committee should also evaluate the strategic plan on a regular basis. This will ensure that any small changes required can be made. More importantly, this process will enable the committee to communicate progress to members and allow victories to be celebrated and contingencies to be established as required.

STEP SIX: REVIEW YOUR PLAN

A strategic plan is a living document, and should be reviewed on a regular basis (usually two or four times each year). This will allow any progress to be captured while also providing an opportunity to make any required changes / updates. If any changes are to be made, the committee should report the changes to members of the organisation and manage the change effectively by updating key actions and associated responsibilities to ensure the amended goals can be achieved.

As previously outlined, an organisation committee should continue to clearly communicate its strategic plan and ensure members are made aware of any progress made in achieving the identified goals. This assists with keeping the plan relevant and maintain support from members.

ACTIVITY TWO: STRATEGIC PLAN

STRATEGIC PLAN 20__ - 20__				
VISION				
PURPOSE				
PRINCIPLES				
KEY DRIVERS				
PRIORITIES				
ACTIONS				
RESOURCES REQUIRED				
RESPONSIBLE PERSONNEL				
INDICATORS OF SUCCESS				

